तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Identical with Vrindavan

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ śrīman-mathurā-maṇḍale sthitiḥ

One should congregationally chant the holy name of the Lord and reside in Vrindavan.

PURPORT

Srila Narottama Das Thakur has sung:

śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, yeba jāne cintāmaṇi
tāra haya vrajabhūmi vāsa

"One who understands the transcendental nature of Nabadwip and its surrounding area, where Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu enacted His pastimes, resides always in Vrindavan." Similarly, living in Jagannath Puri is as good as living in Vrindavan. The conclusion is that Navadwip Dham, Jagannath Puri Dham and Vrindavan Dham are identical.

However, if one goes to *mathurā-maṇḍala-bhūmi* to gratify one's senses or to earn a livelihood, one commits an offense. Such a condemned person must be penalized in the next life by becoming a hog or a monkey in Vrindavan Dham. After taking on such a body, the offender is liberated in the following life. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur remarks that residing in Vrindavan with a view to enjoy sense gratification surely leads a so-called devotee to a lower species.

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Residence in Vrindavan

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, madhya-līlā, chapter* 22, Mahaprabhu spoke the sixty-four items of *sādhana-bhakti*. Then, in text 128, he concluded by emphasizing five things:

sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana

One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathura, and worship the deity with faith and veneration.

Mahaprabhu further explained in text 129:

sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga
kṛṣṇa-prema janmāya ei pāṅcera alpa saṅga

These activities are *nitya-karma*, eternal. If you daily perform these five activities then very easily you will develop *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. However, if you only do *sādhu-saṅga* you will get everything. You will do *kṛṣṇa-nāma-kīrtana*. You will also hear *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, because *sādhu* always speaks from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. And you will remain in Mathura. *Sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa* and *mathurā-vāsa*. We will explain what is Mathura:

Mathura is the appearance place of Krishna. Krishna appears where such a *sādhu*

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is speaking *kṛṣṇa-kathā. Krishna-kathā* is so attractive that Krishna Himself becomes attracted and appears there. That place is Mathura. So by hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā* from such a *sādhu* you can have the opportunity to do *mathurā-vāsa*, to live in Mathura. Also, *śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana* — because the *sādhu* has a temple you will thus get this *arcā-vigraha-sevā,* worship of the deity.

It is said, "Do *mathurā-vāsa*, stay in Mathura." *Sādhu* has created Mathura. Mathura is there and he gives you the opportunity to stay in Mathura. But are you really staying in Mathura? Kamsa stayed in Mathura, but why he did not develop *kṛṣṇa-bhakti?*

In answer we may say, what was Kamsa thinking of? Kamsa was trying to enjoy and lord it over Mathura. He was thinking how to become *mathurā-nātha*, the Lord of Mathura. But *mathurā-nātha* is Krishna, not Kamsa. Therefore, although he was staying in Mathura he could not develop *kṛṣṇa-bhakti.*

Are you like that? Are you staying in Mathura to try to enjoy as Kamsa did? What was Kamsa's destination? What did he get? If you behave like him then the same destination is there for you. Do not do like that. What is the destination of the demons that are killed by Lord Hari? They merge into the *brahman* effulgence; they get *brahma-sāyujya-mukti. kaivalya narakāyate* — Merging into the *brahman* effulgence is a hellish situation and *vaiṣṇavas* do not want it. If you are behaving like a demon, you can only get up to that. So how can you do *mathurā–vāsa* if you are staying in Mathura, in the *dhāma,* but are trying to enjoy? Enjoying Mathura is not *mathurā-vāsa.* You will be like Kamsa. Don't do it!

Mathurā-śuddha-sattva-maya — the abode of Krishna is *śuddha-sattva,* pure goodness. Here in the material world we find twenty-four *tattvas.* There are five *karmendriyas*, working senses; five *jñānendriyas,* knowledge-acquiring senses; five gross material elements, *bhūmi, āpaḥ, anala, vāyu, kham* — earth, water, fire, air, ether; and the five objects of sense enjoyment, *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha* — sound, touch, form, taste, and smell. Then there is *mahat-tattva,* the aggregate material ingredients; and *mana, buddhi,* and *ahaṅkāra* — mind, intelligence and false ego. These comprise the material world, the cosmic manifestation.

Beyond this is Vaikuntha, and Mathura is superior to Vaikuntha. That Mathura descends here in the material world. In Uttar Pradesh you can find the district of Mathura, Vrindavan is there. When Krishna appeared, the *dhāma* appeared with Him. It descends, but it never becomes affected by the modes of material nature. Although the lotus leaf is in the water, the water does not touch it. Similarly, the *dhāma* remains unaffected in that way. That is Vaikuntha or Mathura. That Mathura is the abode and appearance place of Krishna. Just as Krishna is supremely independent, similarly Mathura is also supremely independent. As it is the *dhāma*, the appearance place of Krishna, Mathura also has mercy. As Krishna is merciful, the *dhāma* is also merciful. So you must get its mercy, you must pray for its mercy. Do not try to enjoy Mathura; rather, try to render service to Mathura.

In Vrindavan, Mathura, the creepers and everything else are transcendental, but you should understand it in *tattva.* It is not enough for one to think or concoct in their mind, "Oh yes! This is a creeper in Vrindavan; it is transcendental." One should have the vision to see it, to understand it, and to realize it. In Mathura the trees, creepers, mountains, rivers, and fountains — all of these things, even the animals, are all *guru*. They are all engaged in the loving service of Krishna, and so they are my *guru.* I am the lowest of the low, *tṛṇād api sunīcena.* This is what Mahaprabhu said, "I am the lowest of the low, they are all superior to Me. All are My *guru.*" If you can develop this mood, this intelligence, then you will be able to do *mathurā-vāsa.* ✿

— Excerpted from chapter one of *"The Last Limit of Bhakti"*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. 1994.

The Life of Jahnava Mata

nityānanda-priyāṁ prema-bhakti-ratna-pradāyinīm
śrī jāhnaveśvarīṁ vande tāpa-traya-nivāriṇīm

[Spoken by Goddess Chandi:] I worship Sri Jahnava Ishwari. She is the wife of Lord Nityananda and the giver of the jewel of *prema-bhakti*. She eradicates the three-fold miseries of material existence. — *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* 11.52

Jahnava Mata was the wife of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. According to Srila Kavi Karnapur's *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (65 and 66) Jahnava Devi is a manifestation of both Revati, the wife of Lord Balaram, and Ananga-manjari, the younger sister of Srimati Radharani.

The *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (65) describes that the same Maharaja Kakudmi who was advised by Lord Brahma to offer his beautiful daughter Revati to Balaram, appeared in *gaura-līlā* as the *brāhmaṇa* Surya Das Sarkhel. Surya Das' wife was named Bhadravati. They had two daughters Vasudha and Jahnava, who were both married to Lord Nityanananda Prabhu. According to the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna*, Surya Das Sarkhel was one of six sons born to the *brāhmaṇa* Kansari Mishra of Kulina-gram and his wife Kamala Devi. One of Surya Das' younger brothers was Gauri Das Pandit, the famous associate of Lord Nityananda Prabhu and incarnation of Subal Sakha.

In his purport to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta ādi* 11.25, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada describes:

> In the *Bhakti-ratnākara* (Twelfth Wave), it is stated that a few miles from Nabadwip is a place called Saligram that was the residence of Surya Das Sarkhel. He was employed as a secretary in the Muslim government of that time, and thus he amassed a good fortune. Surya Das had four brothers, all of whom were pure *vaiṣṇavas*. Vasudha and Jahnava were two daughters of Surya Das Sarkhel.

Jahnava had no children, but her elder sister had a daughter named Ganga devi and a son named Virabhadra. In his purport to *Cc. ādi* 11.8, Srila Prabhupada writes:

> Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur writes in his *Anubhāṣya*, "Virabhadra Gosani was the direct son of Srila Nityananda Prabhu and a disciple of Jahnava-devi. His real mother was Vasudha. In the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, 67, he is mentioned as an incarnation of Kshirodakasayi Vishnu. Therefore, Virabhadra Gosani is non-different from Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Jahnava was considered the leader of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavas after the disappearance of the Lord and His primary associates. She initiated disciples and presided over the famous festival at Kheturi Gram.

Jahnava Mata had a deity of herself made and placed it on the left side of the famous deity of Gopinatha in Vrindavan. It is said that this made Pyariji, the deity of Radha, unhappy, and the king of Jaipur had to make a compromise between the two. Since that time the deity of Jahnava Devi has remained on Gopinatha's right side.

Srila Narahari Das has written the following song describing the auspicious *adhivāsa* ceremony preceding the wedding of Vasudha and Jahnava to Lord Nityananda Prabhu:

(*Bhūpālī-rāga*)

vasudhā jāhnavā devī śobhāvadhi
adhivāsa-bhūṣā-bhūṣita tanu
jhalamala kare cāru ruci chaṭā
taḍita kuṅkuma ketakī janu

Decorated with ornaments for the adhivas, the goddesses Vasudha and Jahnava exhibit the last limit of beauty. They glisten like lightning, kumkum, or ketaki flowers.

cāri-pāśe vipra- gaṇa dhanya māne
cāhi kanyā-pāne haraṣa-hiyā
veda-dhvani kari kare āśīrvāda
dhānya dūrbā duñhu mastake diyā

From the four directions, *brāhmaṇas* offer blessings. With joyful hearts, they glance at the two girls. They chant the Vedas and speak words of blessing. They touch the two girls' heads with auspicious *dūrbā* grass.

paṇḍita-gharaṇī dharaṇīte pada
nā dharaya hiyā dhairaja bāndhe
vividha maṅgala karu sakhī-kula
ulu lulu dei kata nā sādhe

Although their feet peacefully rest upon the ground, the *paṇḍitas'* wives find they cannot keep their hearts peaceful and still. The young girl friends of the two brides all offer auspicious blessings, "*Ulu-lulu!*" How many desires fill their hearts?

śaṅkha ghaṇṭā ādi vādya bāje bahu
kolāhala nāhi tulanā dite
bhaṇe narahari sura-nārī alakhita
dekhe kata kautuka cite

Conchshells, bells, and a host of musical instruments sound. An incomparable tumult arises. Narahari Das says, how many demigoddesses came and, unnoticed by the others, watched all of this with joyful hearts?

[For more stories and information about Jahnava Mata see KK Bindu, issues 4 and 15, and also Sri Krishna Kathamrita, issue 6.]

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Prayer to Jahnava Mata

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Kalyāna Kalpataru *was the first book of songs compiled by Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode. It was published in 1881 while he was serving in Orissa as the first headmaster of Cuttack Victoria High School (known today as Bhakta Madhu Vidyapith). Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode's* dīkṣā-guru *Sri Bipin Bihari Goswami was in the disciplic line of Jahnava Mata, and in the invocation of* Kalyāna Kalpataru *he first offers obeisances to his predecessor gurus and then prays to them for the blessings of Jahnava:*

nikhila-vaiṣṇava-jana dayā prakāsiyā
śrī-jāhnavā-pade more rākhaha ṭaniyā

O vaiṣṇavas, *please be merciful to me. Bring me to Jahnava-devi's feet and give me shelter there.*

The following is the third song from the first chapter of the third section of Kalyāna Kalpataru*:*

bhavārnave pa'ḍe mora ākula parāṇ
kise kūla pā'ba, tā'ra nā pāi sandhān

Having fallen into this vast ocean of material existence, my heart has become extremely worried. I search for the shore, but have no idea how to reach it.

nā āche karama-bal, nāhi jñāna-bal
yāga-yoga-tapo-dharma — nā āche sambal

I have no strength from my previous karma nor from all my knowledge. Nor do I have any help from virtues accrued by sacrifices, yoga practice, or austerities.

nitānta durbala āmi, nā jāni sāntār
e vipade ke āmāre karibe uddhār?

I am extremely feeble, and I don't know how to swim. Who will rescue me from this dreadful calamity?

viśaya-kumbhīra tāhe bhīṣaṇa-darśan
kāmera taraṅga sadā kare' uttejan

I see the horrible alligator of sense gratification present before me, and the waves of lust are constantly agitating and provoking me.

prāttana-vāyura vega sahite nā pāri
kāndiyā asthira mana, nā dekhi kāṇḍārī

I can no longer cope with the raging wind of all the bodily and mental urges accumulated in my heart due to my previous activities. I simply weep with an agitated mind, for there is no rescuer in sight.

ogo śrī jāhnavā devī! e dāse karuṇā
kara' āji nija-guṇe, ghucāo yantraṇā

Oh most revered Jahnava Devi! Please show mercy to this servant today by virtue of your own good qualities, and kindly relieve all of his afflictions.

tomāra caraṇa-tarī kariyā āśray
bhavārṇava pāra ha'ba ka'rechi niścay

By taking shelter in the boat of your lotus feet I will certainly be able to cross over this vast ocean of material existence.

tumi nityānanda-śakti kṛṣṇa-bhakti-guru
e dāse karaha dāna pada-kalpa-taru

You are the very pleasure potency of Lord Nityananda, and you are the teacher of devotion to Lord Krishna. Kindly bestow upon this servant the wish-fulfilling desire tree of your lotus feet.

kata kata pāmarere ka'recha uddhār
tomāra caraṇe āja e kāṅgāla chār

This most wretched and shameful rogue begs at your feet today, for he sees that you are delivering many other sinners.

— Translated by Sri Dasarath Suta Das. Nectar Books. Union City, Georgia, USA. 1988.

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